

B. Ball), formerly Zoological Assistant at the National Museum and an indefatigable collector of zoological material.

In the preparation of this description I have to acknowledge with thanks the loan of comparative material from P. A. Clancey, Director of the Durban Museum and Art Gallery; in the course of which, in conjunction with that in the National Museum, I have examined over 140 specimens from South, Central and East Africa representative of the following races which I consider recognisable: the nominate, *zuluensis*, *zambesiana*, *elachior*, *jubaensis*, *garguensis* and *ugandae*, as well as the race here formally described.

An unusual case of Predation by *Aquila verreauxi*

by CAPTAIN CHARLES R. S. PITMAN

Received 16th October, 1959

Mr. A. B. Daneel has sent me from South Africa the account—given him by a reliable eye witness—of a strange occurrence in Bechuanaland, in December 1958. A pair of Black Eagles, *Aquila verreauxi* and a number of Cape Vultures, *Gyps coprotheres* shared the nesting ledges provided by an isolated cliff with some Lanners, *Falco biarmicus* and Black Storks, *Ciconia nigra*. One of the Black Eagles was observed to stoop repeatedly at a Vulture sitting on a ledge until it was forced to take off. The Eagle then stooped at the Vulture in mid-air, striking it and sending it spinning to the ground. On inspection it was found to have claw marks at the base of the neck and was quite dead. It was not the nesting season for either species. There were many carcasses of Vultures lying around, and prior to witnessing this unprovoked attack it had been surmised that the mortality was due to disease or some unusual factor. But subsequently it was believed that the Eagles might have been mainly responsible.

A New Race of Red-billed Quelea from South-Eastern Africa

by MR. P. A. CLANCEY

Received 19th January, 1960

A series of eighteen Red-billed Queleas *Quelea quelea* (Linnaeus) from Bergville, Natal, stands apart as appreciably darker and colder in colour on the upper-parts, wings and tails than our sample of undoubted *Q.q. lathamii* (A. Smith), 1836: country near to and beyond Kurrichane, i.e., Zeerust, western Transvaal. The difference is sufficiently marked as to warrant the recognition of the East Griqualand, Natal and eastern Orange Free State populations of *Q.quelea* as a new race, which may be known as

***Quelea quelea spoliator*, subsp. nov.**

Type: ♂, adult. Winter dress. Near Bergville, Natal. 8th November, 1959. Collected by Mr. J. Muller. In the collection of the Durban Museum.

Diagnosis: Similar to *Q.q.lathamii* in fresh non-breeding dress, but distinguishable by the distinctly darker colour of the head-top and nape (about Deep Mouse Gray (*vide* Ridgway, *Color Standards and Color Nomenclature*, 1912, pl. li), as against Light Grayish Olive (pl. xlvi)); mantle and rump darker, the pale edges to the feathers duller than the

Pinkish Buff (pl. xxix) of *Q.q.lathamii*. Wings and tail darker. Not markedly different ventrally, though inclined to be more strongly washed with grey on the sides of the breast, body and flanks. Similar in size.

Material: *Q.q.spoliator*, 20 (18 *Paratypes*). *Q.q.lathamii*, 20 (western and eastern Transvaal, Southern Rhodesia and Damaraland, South-West Africa).

Measurements of the Type: Wing (flattened), 69, culmen (exposed) 18.5, tarsus 19, tail 37 mm.

Range: The south-eastern sector of the species' South African range. Breeds along the base of the Drakensberg escarpment in East Griqualand (Ongeluk's Nek, Matatiele district, etc.) and Natal (Bergville), and in adjacent districts of the Orange Free State (Bethlehem). A single specimen from Kendal, near Witbank, Transvaal highveld (16th July, 1956), is more like *Q.q.spoliator* than *Q.q.lathamii*.

Remarks: The name chosen for the new taxon is from the Latin *spoliator*, a robber, plunderer, which is descriptive of its extremely destructive proclivities in agricultural districts. As is well known, the African *Quelea quelea* has virtually usurped the position formerly held by the migratory locust as the chief pest of African agriculture.

Q.q.lathamii is mainly a race of the interior and western savannas of sub-continental South Africa, but its precise breeding range is not clear, as the populations seem to be given to quite considerable movement in the non-breeding season, birds ringed near Pretoria, in the Transvaal, being recovered as far afield as Nyasaland. Examples ringed near Bulawayo have been taken at Monze, Kafue River, Northern Rhodesia (*vide* Benson and White, *Check List of the Birds of Northern Rhodesia*, 1957, p. 124), while Benson, *Check List of the Birds of Nyasaland*, 1953, p. 76, considered *Q.q.lathamii* "mainly a non-breeding visitor from South Africa or Southern Rhodesia" to Nyasaland, where it is regular. It is not known if *Q.q.spoliator* moves about to the same extent, though the indications are that it does not.

In the paratypical series of *Q.q.spoliator*, all collected on 8th November, 1959, some of the males have started to assume the breeding dress over the head.

Notes on some African warblers

PART TWO

by MR. C. M. N. WHITE

Received 6th November, 1959

(1) *Bradypterus lopezi* (Alexander).

Although this bird has always been treated as a species, it would appear to be no more than a subspecies of the *B. barratti*, closely allied to *camerunensis* Alexander. *B. lopezi* has always been understood to consist of the nominate form on Fernando Po, and a much lighter and redder form, *barakae*, on Ruwenzori and adjacent mountains. Examination of *lopezi* shows that it can quite properly be associated with *camerunensis* from which it is obviously derived, differing in its lighter and brighter reddish upperside and light reddish wash on throat and belly. *B. barakae* is more distinct, since apart from its light colour, it has narrower webbing to the tail feathers. This difference is also said to be characteristic of *lopezi*,